JONATHAN HICKMAN • ESAD RIBIC • IVE SVORCINA

SECRET WARS

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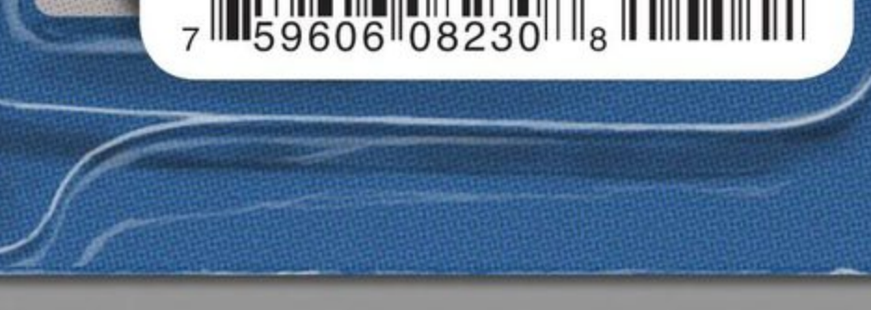

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T. 15

BEFORE THE WORLD, THERE WAS THE ETHER...

WE CANNOT CALL IT *HEAVEN*, OR *FOREVER*, OR ANY OTHER JOYFUL THING...

...FOR IT WAS *NOTHING*. AND IN THIS OCEAN OF ABSENCE, THERE WAS ONLY GOD DOOM AND HIS FIRST DISCIPLE: OUR FALLEN LEADER, *STEPHEN STRANGE*.

THINK ON IT, BROTHERS AND SISTERS:

THERE WAS NOTHING. AND THEN...THERE WAS *EVERYTHING*.

AND THE ONLY WITNESS TO THE MIRACLE OF CREATION BESIDES THE ALL-FATHER HIMSELF WAS THE GOOD SHERIFF STRANGE.

WHAT AN HONOR. WHAT A LIFE.

IF VALHALLA IS FOR THE BRAVE, STEPHEN...

...THEN THERE YOU WILL BE A KING.

OF ALL OF US, YOU WERE TRULY THE MOST WORTHY.

WHAT THE HEL IS GOING ON HERE?

SHH. WE'LL SPEAK LATER.

THERE IS GOING TO BE A PUBLIC MEMORIAL LATER WHERE ALL THE VARIOUS KINGDOM BARONS AND CITIZENS OF DOOMGARD CAN PAY THEIR RESPECTS...

...BUT HE WAS YOUR FRIEND, VICTOR. AND I THOUGHT YOU WOULD APPRECIATE SOMETHING MORE... ***PERSONAL.***

OF COURSE.

THANK YOU, SUSAN.

FRANKLIN, WOULD YOU PLEASE...

OKAY.

I'M SORRY YOU DIED, MISTER STRANGE.

I LIKED YOU A LOT.

WHEN WE FIND OUT WHO DID THIS, I'M GONNA MASH THEM INTO LITTLE PIECES.

"JUST YOU WATCH."

SECRET WARS

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THE MULTIVERSE WAS DESTROYED.

•

TWO LIFE RAFTS ESCAPED THE FINAL COLLISION OF EARTH-616 AND EARTH-1610, CARRYING HEROES AND VILLAINS FROM BOTH REALITIES.

•

THE SURVIVORS AWAKENED ON BATTLEWORLD, A PLANET COMPOSED OF THE FRAGMENTS OF WORLDS THAT NO LONGER EXIST AND MAINTAINED BY THE IRON WILL OF ITS GOD AND MASTER, VICTOR VON DOOM.

•

DOOM OFFERED THE INCURSION SURVIVORS A CHANCE TO SURRENDER. THEY REFUSED. BEFORE DOOM COULD DESTROY THEM, SHERIFF STRANGE SCATTERED THEM ACROSS BATTLEWORLD, A BETRAYAL WHICH COST HIM HIS LIFE.

◆

05

◆

OWEN REECE DIED FOR OUR SINS

CAST

BATTLEWORLD

GOD EMPEROR DOOM, RULER OF BATTLEWORLD

SUSAN STORM, ROYAL CONSORT

VALERIA, HEAD OF THE FOUNDATION

STEPHEN STRANGE, SHERIFF OF AGAMOTTO

THE FOUNDATION

FRANKLIN

ALEX POWER

DRAGON MAN

BENTLEY 23

NOSTRADAMUS

NIGHT MACHINE

PSYCHO MAN

THORS

ENFORCERS OF DOOM'S JUSTICE

SURVIVORS OF THE FINAL INCURSION

THE LIFE RAFT

MR. FANTASTIC

BLACK PANTHER

CAPTAIN MARVEL

STAR-LORD

CYCLOPS/PHOENIX

SPIDER-MAN-616

SPIDER-MAN-1610

THOR

THE CABAL

THANOS

BLACK SWAN

TERRAX

NAMOR

PROXIMA MIDNIGHT

MAXIMUS

CORVUS GLAIVE

THE MAKER

...BUT THERE'S NO ARGUING WHETHER OR NOT THE SHERIFF WAS A GREAT MAN. HE WAS CERTAINLY THAT.

I'M SORRY, DAD.

YOU KNOW, HE AND I DIDN'T ALWAYS SEE EYE TO EYE...

WE LIVE OUR LIVES DEFINED BY THE CHOICES WE MAKE. AND IN THE END, THE HIGH COST OF LIVING IS DEATH.

WE ALL DESERVE BETTER.

WELL, I'M THE REASON HE WAS OUT THERE. MY TEAM FOUND THE VESSEL AND HE QUARANTINED IT.

SO MAYBE THIS IS ALL MY FAULT AND I SHOULD BE SMART ENOUGH TO JUST KEEP MY HEAD DOWN, BUT YOU KNOW ME...I HAVE TO ASK...WHY ARE YOU NOW TASKING MY OFFICE WITH TRACKING DOWN THE PEOPLE WHO DID THIS?

MORE THAN THAT, DAD, WHY AREN'T THEY *DEAD?*

I MEAN, REALLY, WHO ESCAPES THE JUDGMENT OF GOD IN A SITUATION LIKE THIS?

NO ONE HAS ESCAPED ANYTHING, VALERIA.

BUT IT IS UNWISE FOR ME TO PURSUE THEM AT THIS TIME. I'M UPSET. AND IN SUCH A STATE...I JUST MIGHT BREAK THE WORLD.

SO YOU WILL FIND THEM, AND THEN I WILL SHOW YOU WHAT *REAL* JUDGMENT LOOKS LIKE.

OKAY. BUT I STILL DON'T UNDERSTAND HOW THEY ALL ESCAPED.

IF I'M GOING TO FIND THESE PEOPLE, I HAVE TO KNOW EVERYTHING ABOUT THEM.

I KNOW SOMETHING... *UNEXPECTED* HAPPENED OUT THERE, FATHER, AND I WANT TO KNOW WHAT IT WAS.

UNDYING LOVE AND ETERNAL PATIENCE ARE NOT THE SAME THING, CHILD.

DO NOT CONFUSE THEM.

I NEED YOU TO FIND THESE PEOPLE. I NEED YOU TO CATCH THEM. AND I NEED YOU TO DO IT WITHOUT ASKING ANY MORE QUESTIONS.

ARE YOU THE DAUGHTER OF DOOM? CAPABLE OF ALL THINGS?

YES, SIR.

THEN FIND THEM.

DAMN YOU, STEPHEN.

FIND THE QUIETEST PLACE IN THE WORLD--CALL IT HERE, CALL IT NOW--AND IF YOU CLOSE YOUR EYES AND LISTEN, YOU STILL WON'T BE ABLE TO HEAR A THING.

NOT ONE THING, VICTOR. LIKE MOST THINGS THAT PERCEIVE, OUR EARS LIE SO MUCH.

BUT IF YOU SIT STILL--UNMOVING, AT PEACE WITH YOUR PLACE IN THE UNIVERSE-- YOU CAN *FEEL* IT. A SLIGHT RUMBLING IN YOUR STOMACH.

A *DISTURBANCE* IN THE WORLD. ONE RESONATING IN YOUR GUTS.

WE HAVE THE *APPEARANCE* OF PEACE... OF BEING WHOLE... BUT I THINK IT ALL MIGHT JUST FLY APART IF WE'RE NOT CAREFUL.

DID YOU BRING ME SOMETHING TO EAT?

I'M SORRY.

I DID NOT. IT DIDN'T OCCUR TO ME.

I HAD OTHER THINGS ON MY MIND.

I DEVOURED EVERYTHING, VICTOR. BUT I'M STILL HUNGRY.

FROM THE TOP OF MY HEAD RIGHT DOWN TO MY LITTLE TOE BITS. COUNTLESS MICROSCOPIC CELLS SWIMMING IN THE SEA OF OWEN AND EACH ONE CRAVES NOURISHMENT.

IF I DON'T EAT SOMETHING SOON, I'LL JUST BE SKIN AND BONES.

STEPHEN STRANGE IS DEAD.

WELL. WELL, NOW.

ISN'T THAT A SURPRISE?

WAS IT CANCER? IT'S *ALWAYS* CANCER.

NO. IT WAS INNER DECAY OF A DIFFERENT SORT.

HIS *DOUBT* KILLED HIM.

INTERESTING. SURPRISING. UNEXPECTED, EVEN. HOW IS THAT POSSIBLE? BECAUSE HE KNEW. HE WAS THERE. HE SAW IT. BUT THEN, OUR EYES ARE LIKE OUR EARS. THEY LIE TOO, DON'T THEY?

HE WAS ONLY THERE AT THE END, MISTER REECE.

AND EVEN I WAS NOT THERE AT THE START.

IN THE BEGINNING, IT WAS JUST YOU AND THEM.

NO. IT WAS JUST *THEM.*

AR

"THE LORDS OF THE WHITE LIGHT. THOSE FROM BEYOND.

"*BEYONDERS.* OMNIPOTENT. ALL-POWERFUL. MORE CURIOUS THAN A CAT.

"THEY BUILT WHOLE UNIVERSES. RANDOM IDEAS GIVEN FORM. THEY TESTED THEM. THEY TWISTED LIFE INTO EVERY SHAPE POSSIBLE, THEY PUSHED IT AS FAR AS IT COULD GO..."

AND THEN THEY GOT BORED WITH *LIFE* AND STARTED LOVING THE IDEA OF *DEATH.*

SOMETIMES YOU'VE TINKERED ALL YOU CAN...AND THE ONLY THING LEFT TO DO IS TEAR IT ALL DOWN AND START OVER.

SO THEN THEY MADE ME.

YES. YOU.

OWEN REECE. *THE MOLECULE MAN.*

A BOMB BUILT TO DESTROY A UNIVERSE.

NOT *A* BOMB. *THE* BOMB.

BOMB. BOMB. BOMB.

SET ME OFF AND WATCH ME EXPLODE.

IT WAS A GOOD PLAN. THE BEYONDERS...THEY REALLY KNEW THEIR STUFF.

THEY MADE ONE OF ME TO KILL A UNIVERSE. AND ALL OF ME TO KILL THE MULTIVERSE. THE SAME PERSON ACROSS ALL OF REALITY. SLICED UP INTO DELICIOUS LITTLE BITES.

BUT DO YOU KNOW WHAT THE BEYONDERS FORGOT TO PLAN FOR, VICTOR?

YES. THEY MADE YOU A MAN. THEY GAVE YOU *CHOICE.*

WE LIVE OUR LIVES DEFINED BY THE CHOICES WE MAKE. AND IN THE END, THE HIGH COST OF LIVING IS--

ME!

ME. ME. ME. I HAD A CHOICE, AND MY CHOICE WAS *YOU.*

TELL ME, VICTOR. DO YOU EVER WONDER WHO EXACTLY FOUND WHO? FORWARDS AND BACKWARDS IN TIME...

WAS IT YOU WHO FOUND ME? OR *I* WHO FOUND *YOU?*

THE ORDER IS OF LITTLE CONSEQUENCE. WHAT MATTERED WAS THAT WE BOTH KNEW WHAT HAD TO BE DONE.

YOU WERE A BOMB MEANT TO SIMULTANEOUSLY EXPLODE. SO WE DECIDED TO SET SOME OF YOU OFF EARLY. BLOW THE PRIMER TO DIMINISH THE CHARGE.

"WE HAD TO KILL ME. LOTS AND LOTS OF ME'S.

"AT FIRST, IT WAS A COST I WAS WILLING TO PAY...

"AND WE BUILT A RELIGION OF BLACK SWANS AROUND THAT IDEA."

WITH EACH ME THAT WAS KILLED, I LOST A BIT OF WHAT MADE ME...ME. IT'S A COST I WAS WILLING TO PAY...

...BUT THE MADNESS WASN'T WORTH IT. WE WEREN'T GOING TO PREVENT THE EARLY DEATH OF THE MULTIVERSE. THE BEYONDERS HAD BUILT ME TOO WELL...

"SO WE GOT TRICKY.

"AND THAT'S WHEN STEPHEN JOINED US--RIGHT BEFORE THE END.

"WHILE THE SWANS WERE BUSY KILLING ME'S...YOU AND I WERE BUSY BUILDING SOMETHING ELSE.

"A BETTER BOMB.

"A BETTER ME."

WE ARE BEYOND.

DREAMERS. DESTROYERS. ALL OF REALITY OUR WHIM.

WHO DARES STAND BEFORE US?

I.

DOOM.

"WE COULDN'T STOP THE BEYONDERS FROM DESTROYING EVERYTHING, BUT WE COULD DRAW THEM OUT...

"DESTROY THEM...

"STEAL THEIR POWER...

"AND STORE IT SOMEPLACE SAFE.

"WHERE IT COULD BE USED TO PRESERVE SOME OF WHAT HAD BEEN LOST."

THE MOLECULE MAN WILL SERVE AS A CONDUIT, STEPHEN. TOGETHER WE CAN SAVE THE REMNANTS OF WORLDS...

THE SCALE OF IT... THE SCOPE...HOW DO YOU CHOOSE WHAT LIVES AND DIES...?

IT'S TOO MUCH TO FATHOM, VICTOR. IT'S TOO MUCH. I... I CAN'T...

YOU HAVE TO DO IT.

AND NOW STEPHEN IS DEAD. GONE. *GOODBYE.*

HIS REMAINING BITS BURIED DEEP IN THE GROUND.

YES.

I WANT YOU TO KNOW THAT IT WAS ME WHO PUT HIM THERE.

I KNOW. YOU THINK I COULDN'T SMELL THE GUILT ON YOU? YOU REEK OF SHAME, GOD.

STEPHEN MAY NOT HAVE FULLY COMPREHENDED IT, BUT HE MADE HIS DECISION, AND IT MARKED HIM AS A THREAT TO WHAT WE HAVE BUILT.

HE LEFT ME NO CHOICE.

AND SO OUR GOOD FRIEND, THE DOCTOR, HAD TO GO.

I THINK YOU'VE STARTED SOMETHING, VICTOR. AN UNRAVELING THAT JUST MIGHT TAKE US ALL DOWN. MAKES ME WONDER WHICH OF US IS NEXT?

IF WE KISS GOD DOOM GOODBYE, THEN SAY FAREWELL TO THIS WORLD ALSO, AS YOU'RE THE ONE WHO'S HOLDING IT TOGETHER.

AND WHAT IF IT'S YOU, MISTER REECE?

WELL... WON'T THAT BE EXCITING?

HMMM. JUST HOW WE LIKE IT.

NEXT TIME BRING ME SOMETHING TO EAT.

THE DEPARTMENT OF SCIENCE.
THE FUTURE FOUNDATION.
JUSTICE DIVISION.

OKAY, EVERYONE, LISTEN UP...

GOD HAS A JOB FOR US-- AND WHEN I SAY GOD, I DO MEAN DADDY.

WE'RE GONNA PLAY A GAME OF HIDE-AND-SEEK WITH A BUNCH OF BAD BOYS AND GIRLS WHO PRESENT A THREAT TO THE KINGDOMS AND POSSIBLY THE WORLD ITSELF.

DOOM WANTS US TO FIND THESE REBELS.

SO, AS OF NOW, ALL OTHER PROJECTS ARE SUSPENDED.

NO DEEP DIVING IN THE NEGATIVE ZONE INSIDE THE PLANET, NO CATALOGING OBJECTS OF POWER, NONE OF IT.

AND BENTLEY, THAT INCLUDES YOUR LITTLE EXPERIMENTS SOUTH OF THE SHIELD.

OH, COME ON!

LIFE'S TOUGH.

ALEX, DRAGON...FILL EVERYONE IN ON WHAT WE KNOW ABOUT THE CRIME SCENE.

WELL, AS YOU GUYS KNOW WE'VE DEVELOPED SOME PRETTY SPECIALIZED EQUIPMENT FOR DETECTING AND DIFFERENTIATING SPECIFIC ENERGY SIGNATURES.

I MEAN, IT'S ALWAYS BEEN HARD, BECAUSE OUR WORLD NATURALLY GIVES OFF SO MUCH BACKGROUND RADIATION. YOU KNOW, *GOD PARTICLES...*

CASTLE DOOM

THE STUFF OF DOOM.

WHICH, AS YOU ALSO KNOW, RADIATES OUT FROM THE POINT OF ITS HIGHEST CONCENTRATION: *CASTLE DOOM.*

CASTLE DOOM

NOW, THIS IS THE BASIC ENERGY FOUND AT THE HEART OF EVERYTHING ON OUR PLANET. WE'RE ALL MADE OF THIS STUFF--WHICH IS WHY UNTIL WE BUILT OUR EQUIPMENT WE COULDN'T TELL ANY OF IT APART.

OBVIOUSLY, NOW WE CAN.

AND SINCE WE'VE BEEN RECORDING THE READINGS, WE'VE NOTICED THERE ARE ALWAYS TINY ENERGY SPIKES POPPING UP WHEN ONE OF HIS AGENTS--

THORS. GOD, I HATE THE THORS!

--ANY TIME ONE OF HIS AGENTS IS DEPLOYED. THESE ARE PRETTY EASY TO PICK OUT.

AS ARE MAJOR INCIDENTS OF DOOM STUFF.

LIKE WHEN GOD HIMSELF ACTS, THE READINGS ARE OFF THE CHART--LIKE A SMALL STAR LIGHTING UP THE WHOLE WORLD.

EXCUSE ME. I'M NOT SURE I RECOGNIZE THE SIGNIFICANCE OF THIS INFORMATION, ALEX.

ALL OF WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS EXACTLY WHAT WOULD BE EXPECTED.

AND SUCH DATA BORES US.

WHAT'S ***INTERESTING,*** DOCTOR TESLA, IS THAT WE'VE BEEN DOCUMENTING ALL THIS FOR THE LAST YEAR, AND IN ALL THE WORLD THERE'S BEEN ONLY ONE PERSON WHOSE READING--WHOSE POWER--WAS COMPLETELY INDEPENDENT OF DOOM'S.

THE SHERIFF. HIS POWER SPIKED ON THE NEGATIVE SIDE... IT ALWAYS READ AS AN ***ABSENCE OF DOOM.***

UH-HUH. CALL IT DARK MATTER, AND IT SPIKED YESTERDAY BEFORE THE REBELS DISAPPEARED.

WE BELIEVE THAT STEPHEN STRANGE IS THE ONE WHO SCATTERED WHOEVER THESE PEOPLE ARE.

WHICH IMPLIES WHAT? MIND CONTROL? POSSESSION?

I FORESEE SOMETHING ***WORSE.***

SO DO I, NOSTRADAMUS.

SO HERE'S WHAT WE'RE GOING TO DO...

"WE'RE GOING TO TAKE THIS ALL THE WAY TO THE END OF THE LINE.

DOOMGARD.

"NO MATTER WHERE IT GOES.

EGYPTIA.

"I'LL HANDLE ANY NOISE FROM THE THRONE, BUT FOR NOW WHAT WE LEARN STAYS WITH US...

BAR SINISTER.

"UNDERSTAND?"

DOOMSTADT.

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT *REALLY* HAPPENED.

"I WANT TO KNOW WHO THESE PEOPLE ARE.

"I WANT TO KNOW WHERE THEY DISAPPEARED TO."

I WANT TO KNOW WHAT THEY'RE CAPABLE OF.

"AND MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE...

THE SHIELD.

"...WE HAVE TO FIND OUT WHAT THEY WANT.

"AND WHY IT SCARES GOD SO BADLY."

TO BE CONTINUED...

SECRET WARS

LAST DAYS

SILVER SURFER #14

MS. MARVEL #17

LOKI: AGENT OF ASGARD #17

MAGNETO #21

ANT-MAN: LAST DAYS #1

BATTLEWORLD

SECRET WARS: SECRET LOVE #1

AGE OF ULTRON VS. MARVEL ZOMBIES #3

MASTER OF KUNG FU #4

RUNAWAYS #3

ULTIMATE END #4

MARVEL ZOMBIES #3

STAR-LORD AND KITTY PRYDE #2

GHOST RACERS #3

SECRET WARS JOURNAL #4

SECRET WARS: BATTLEWORLD #4

INHUMANS: ATTILAN RISING #4

SIEGE #2

RED SKULL #2

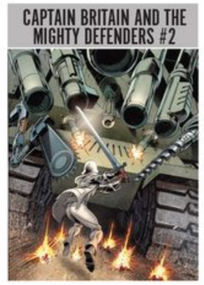
WARZONES!

AGE OF APOCALYPSE #2

CIVIL WAR #2 & #3

HAIL HYDRA #2

WARZONES!


CAPTAIN BRITAIN AND THE MIGHTY DEFENDERS #2

AMAZING SPIDER-MAN: RENEW YOUR VOWS #3 & #4

A-FORCE #3

GIANT-SIZE LITTLE MARVEL: AVX #3

SQUADRON SINISTER #3

WEIRDWORLD #3

1872 #2

ARMOR WARS #4

SPIDER-ISLAND #2

X-MEN 92 #3
X-MEN '92 #6 & #7 (INFINITE COMIC)

FUTURE IMPERFECT #4

YEARS OF FUTURE PAST #4

MRS. DEADPOOL AND THE HOWLING COMMANDOS #3

X-TINCTION AGENDA #3

OLD MAN LOGAN #4

E IS FOR EXTINCTION #3

CAPTAIN MARVEL AND THE CAROL CORPS #3

KORVAC SAGA #3

GUARDIANS OF KNOWHERE #2 & #3

M.O.D.O.K. ASSASSIN #4

INFINITY GAUNTLET #3

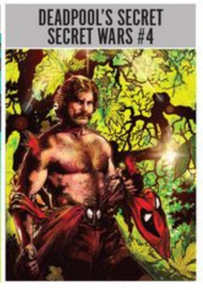
INFERNO #4

SECRET WARS 2099 #4

WHERE MONSTERS DWELL #4

PLANET HULK #4

SPIDER-VERSE #4


DEADPOOL'S SECRET SECRET WARS #4

HOUSE OF M #1

HOWARD THE HUMAN #1

HANK JOHNSON, AGENT OF HYDRA #1

NEXT...